

The District 3 Slate

March 2005

County Supervisor Pam Slater-Price

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Pam Slater-Price

It is with honor and surprise that I learned I was the recipient of the "Lifetime Achievement Award" presented by the Del Mar Chamber of Commerce. I thank those who nominated and/or voted for me ... I am still in shock!

It is gratifying to know that my efforts to preserve our quality of life and promote businesses and tourism are successful. But this is a team effort. Government is not the vehicle that creates jobs - it is the entrepreneurs who take that risk. It is the small business people who develop and market their ideas and innovations.

County government is here to assist as much as possible so that we all can be assured of a quality of life we appreciate.

Pam

Proper Nutrition A Must For America's Children

Proper nutrition is not just an elusive goal for an adult seeking to regain his or her youthful figure. The Food Pyramid is not a lesson learned in the fifth grade only to be forgotten for the rest of one's life.

One of my goals as chair of the Board of Supervisors this year is to raise the awareness of proper nutrition and how the food we eat at home, school and elsewhere impacts health, and how one person's disregard for their health can end up costing all taxpayers more in medical care, higher insurance premiums and loss of funding for other important programs.

I am hosting a Healthy Foods Summit this month bringing school officials together with health authorities to better understand the challenges they face as they work toward mutually acceptable solutions such as less snacks and more healthy foods in school vending machines and events. (More about this conference will be published in the next District 3 Slate.)

Childhood obesity is growing into a crisis here in health-conscious San Diego County. A 2001 study done by the state Department of Education revealed that as many as one in three kids are overweight, and between 24 percent and 48 percent are unfit. Any coach instructing our youth today in a recreation league will acknowledge the truth behind these figures. An obese child today is tomorrow's heart attack waiting to happen. And when the patient is of low-income status, it is the taxpayer that ends up



covering the medical tab.

It is in our best interest, as a society, as a culture, as a community, to stress to our youth how a healthy lifestyle, founded on proper nutrition, enriches one's life. Now another voice is speaking out on this subject -

one that brings instant credibility and focus. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's call for healthier incentives for school-age children is music to my ears.

The governor wants legislation that bans junk food at public schools, saying that vending machines should replace high-calorie sodas and chips with fruits, vegetables and juices. I congratulate Gov. Schwarzenegger in taking on this quest. He is committed to the children of this state, children that should grow up to live healthy, productive lives.

Don't Miss Introspective: 'Women's History Month'

March is not just the month that leads us into spring: It is also "Women's History Month." Through a Third District community projects grant, the non-profit Women's History Museum & Educational Center has been coordinating an important introspective entitled, "Women Who Dare: Shaping The Americas."

After showing at the La Jolla and Solana Beach libraries, the exhibit returns to downtown San Diego. Two segments - "Through Art and Power" and "Through Challenge and Action" - feature the works of playwright, author, poet and educator Ntozake Shange; Anzia Yezierska, author and spokeswoman for Jewish immigrants; and Argentinian poet, author and playwright Alfonsina Storni.

Other influential women profiled in the exhibit include Ida B. Wells Barnett, co-founder of the NAACP; Dolores Huerta, labor leader and co-founder of the United Farm Workers; suffragist Rev. Dr. Anna Howard Shaw; tribal leader-educator Chief Sarah Winnemucca; Chilean-Argentinean novelist Maria Luisa bombal; sculptor Edmonia Lewis; British novelist Susanna Haswell Rowson; and Chilean dipolmat Gabriela Mistral.

The exhibition runs through March 24 at the museum, 2323 Broadway, Suite 107. Hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday; Saturday hours are arranged by appointment by calling (619) 233-7963.

County Earns Energy Award

Leading by example has earned the County of San Diego recognition as an environmental leader. On the behalf of county leaders, I was honored to be presented the "San Diego Excellence in Energy" award recognizing innovation by incorporating solar power and other energy-saving mechanisms at the North County and South Bay regional centers. The building are used by the Sheriff's Department, District Attorney and Superior Courts.

The award was presented by the San Diego Regional Energy Office and the San Diego Chamber of Commerce. It highlighted the county's retrofitting of the two buildings that included 720 photovoltaic panels at each site, resulting in a saving of 2 million kilowatts of power annually, saving taxpayers more than \$250,000 each year.



Wet Weather Brings Greater Risk Of Mosquitoes And Can Cause Viral Outbreaks

Our near-record rainfall has beautified our hillsides and filled our reservoirs. But county health authorities are gearing up for a consequence of 20-plus inches of rain - an accelerated spread this spring of West Nile Virus! The first cases of 2005 has already been recorded in Los Angeles and Orange counties.

West Nile Virus is spread by mosquitoes. Mild winters and wet weather are ideal conditions for mosquitoes to breed. County vector-control personnel will be out in force, spraying lagoons and other bodies of water with insecticide to deter the mosquito's breeding cycle. Homeowners can do their part by carefully checking their yards for any source of free-standing water, such as buckets, flower pots or other containers. Last year, 711 of the 828 cases of human infection occurred in Southern California. Fortunately, in part due to proactive preventative measures, San Diego County had just a single case of human infection.

West Nile Virus is marked by symptoms similar to the flu - head and body aches, fatigue, eye pain, nausea and inflammation of the lymph nodes. Incubation runs between three and 14 days. One in 150 infected people develop severe neurological symptoms, including encephalitis, meningitis and gastrointestinal pain. The best times to avoid mosquito activity is at dawn and dusk. People outside at these times should use repellent and wear long sleeves.

As researchers continue their search for a vaccine for West Nile Virus, county and federal health officials remind residents that March brings the beginning of mosquito season. The mild yet wet winter increases the probability that spring will be a nasty mosquito season.

Being Informed Best Defense Against Predators

Every parent wants the best for their child. And every parent fears the unexpected, that phone call or knock at the door that shatters lives forever. In the past month, there has been a heated debate whether a convicted sex offender should be released into the College area of San Diego.

Parents can and should check a database to see if a sex offender is living in their neighborhood. The Megan's Law site run by the state Attorney General's Office includes information on 63,000 of California's estimated 110,000 registered sex offenders. Home addresses are listed for 33,500 of the most serious

offenders.

In the past, a person had to go to a sheriff's station and wait in line to access the database. Beginning this year, a person can view the expanded database through the privacy of their home computer. The address is <http://meganslaw.ca.gov>.

Nobody wants to believe that their neighbor could be capable of such despicable actions. Then one remembers that David Potterfield was considered the arch-typical next-door neighbor when Danielle Van Dam disappeared.

A year-long state audit reveals the problems a community faces when a repeat sex offender is released. In the College area incident, the

New Registrar Is An Old Pro

Welcome back, Mikel Haas, who this month replaces Sally McPherson as the Registrar of Voters. Haas was director of county Animal Services, where he instituted significant reforms that vastly improved the care and adoption of stray and abandoned animals.

Haas is no stranger to election issues, having previously served as Registrar between December 1995 and July 2001. Replacing Haas at the Department of Animal Services is Dawn Danielson, who has 25 years' experience.

The changes began after Registrar McPherson announced her retirement, effective March 17. Good luck to Sally and best to Mikel and Dawn in their respective positions.



Parents can scan a statewide database listing convicted sexual offenders released from prison or parole.

individual was to be released to a halfway house located within walking distance of schools, playgrounds and parks.

Megan's Law was created to prevent a family from living the pain of that knock on the front door.

AROUND THE THIRD DISTRICT

CARDIFF

Botanical Society Blooms

A surf sculpture will bloom in this seaside community as the Cardiff Botanical Gardens received a \$5,000 community grant that will go toward the purchase of the artwork.

DEL MAR

Powerhouse Park Receives Grant For Annual Fund-raiser

Friends of Powerhouse Park received \$5,000 in community grant funds to help stage the annual dinner-dance fund-raiser. The non-profit association revitalized the landmark that is now a popular facility.

ENCINITAS

Promoting Art

Educational arts programs specifically for children are under way at the Lux Institute following a \$30,000 community projects grant to the non-profit organization.

ESCONDIDO

What A Musical 'Battle'!

People were rockin' on New Year's Eve at the First Night Escondido family celebration that included a Battle of the Bands funded through a \$5,000 community projects grant.

ESCONDIDO

'Pool'ing Resources

More than \$10,000 was raised for the Charles Hulme Community Pool Inc. when it hosted its "Augas Hermosa" dinner fund-raiser, which was underwritten by a \$2,500 community projects grant.

TIERRASANTA

Benches Revitalized

Fifteen benches in Mission Trails Park destroyed during the 2003 wildfire are being replaced through a \$5,000 community grant to the Tierrasanta Community Council.



I Support Protecting San Diego's Military Bases!

Region Is Part Of 'Gibraltar of Pacific'

It is imperative San Diego County does everything possible to protect its military facilities from federal closure. I believe so strongly in this that I have committed \$15,000 in community projects funds to the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corp, which is advocating federal officials on the merits of our facilities and the consequences of closing them, both in terms of national security as well as economic ruination.

San Diego County's military bases play an integral role in what is known as the "Gibraltar of the Pacific," referring to the World War II Mediterranean stronghold that stymied the German military.

California in general, and San Diego in specific, are being studied carefully to see which, if any, facilities will be targeted for closure by the Base Realignment and Closure Commission. Twenty-nine of California's 91 military installations have been closed or "realigned," resulting in the loss of 93,000 good-paying defense jobs and causing an economic impact exceeding \$9 billion.

San Diego County holds strategic importance as its location is the doorway to the Pacific Rim. We must, in a united voice, let it be known that military bases in California - and San Diego in particular - are crucial to our national security.

Be Ready Before Mother Nature Strikes

Mitigation means taking action to reduce the risk of loss of life or property from a future hazardous event. There is no way to guarantee that we will not be affected by disasters in the future, but there are steps a homeowner can take to lessen damage and loss.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) offer these recommendations so that your family will be prepared in a time of crisis:

- Develop and rehearse a family disaster plan - what to do if you have to suddenly leave your home.
- Include a communications plan - how you will contact each other if you are separated
- Assemble emergency supplies, one set for your house and one for your car. Emergency kits should include food, water, a first-aid kit, flashlights, radio and plenty of batteries. The kit in your car should also

have flares and jumper cables.

- Know how to turn off your utilities, and keep the necessary tools at hand. Make sure other members of your family know how to do this too. If you turn off your gas, do not turn it back on yourself. Call the gas company.

- Make copies of vital documents, such as wills, birth certificates, financial records, insurance policies and credit card numbers. Keep the originals in a safe deposit box.

- Make a detailed inventory of your home, garage and surrounding property, with photographs or videotape. Keep those in a safe place.

If you live in an area that is subject to flooding or mudflows, take these measures to protect your home:

- Elevate the furnace, water heater and electric panel in your house.
- Install "check valves" in sewer traps to prevent floodwater from backing up into your home.
- Purchase flood insurance if

you do not already have it. Flood insurance protects against flooding and mudflows; homeowners' insurance does not. Call 1-800-427-4661 for information on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

- Find out where your community stores and distributes sandbags. When you use them, make sure you do not divert runoff onto other property.

- Have flexible pipefittings for gas and water lines installed by a licensed contractor to local codes.

FEMA has produced "Are You Ready? An In-depth Guide to Citizen Preparedness." For this and other information, go to the FEMA website at www.fema.gov.

SBA is the federal government's primary source of money for the long-term rebuilding of disaster-damaged private property.

Disaster loans cover uninsured and uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations.

Economic News Is Great; So Are Our Challenges

How is the 2005 job market looking for the people who live and work in San Diego County? The answer is: "Fantastic!"

Latest economic indicators show our region is in for slow but steady growth through 2005, when an additional 15,000 to 20,000 jobs will be created. Unemployment will hover in the 3 percent range. One already sees this transformation occurring as "Help Wanted" signs announce the need for employees in vari-

ous sectors.

A key factor leading this economic renaissance is the wealth created through appreciation on homes. A detailed study by economist Scott Anderson of Wells Fargo Bank reveals that per capita incomes climbed 75 percent since 1993, when this region emerged from its recession. Home prices shot up an astronomical 320 percent in this same period.

While this is great news for those who own their home (or multiple residential properties),

it creates pressure on those who are struggling to purchase their first home. This is the paradox elected leaders face as they set policy so that future generations will enjoy what we appreciate today. Balancing the need for additional affordable housing with the desire to protect our environment and have open space and parks is the challenge that cannot be misconstrued.

Realtors predict that home prices will rise 5.6 percent this year, based on two key factors - continued demand and the affordability of mortgage loans. Interest rates are predicted to finish the year around 7 percent (they are in mid-5 percent range now).

In San Diego County, continued strong demand should prevent the bursting of the so-called "housing bubble." The truth is more people want to live here than we have homes for. This realization alone is justification to properly plan for and develop the new communities where these people will begin their quest of the American Dream.

This Board of Supervisors is committed to preserving the quality of life we enjoy today. As chairwoman, one of my top priorities is to economically acquire the open space that allows people to "get away from it all."

Filling in the properties necessary to complete the Julian-to-the coast San Dieguito River Park is critical, as well as preserving the San Luis Rey River corridor to the north.

Another important goal we must meet is a transportation system that allows commuters to quickly go from their homes to work. Elected leaders must end the "public transportation vs. the car" debate that continues to antagonize the people we all represent. We need reliable transportation like the Coaster and busses. But we also need a freeway system that can handle the demands of the region. You cannot have one without the other.

In one way, 2005 is the year when we ensure we have the future we want. I look forward to meeting these challenges as your board chairwoman.

The staff of Supervisor Pam Slater-Price

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